



State of Connecticut

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STATE CAPITOL

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Testimony

In support of

*H.B. 6011, AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PERSONAL INCOME TAX DEDUCTION FOR MILITARY
FUNERAL HONOR GUARD DETAIL COMPENSATION*

And

*H.B. 5205, AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS AND THE PASSPORT TO THE PARKS MOTOR
VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE*

*Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs
February 7, 2023*

Dear Co-Chairs Marx, Nolan, Ranking Members Cicarella, Vail, and distinguished members of the Committee on Veterans' and Military Affairs.

Thank you for raising H.B. 6011 and H.B. 5205 for a public hearing and allowing me a chance to submit testimony on these two worthy bills.

There are 12 Military Honor Guard Squads in Connecticut that provide "Military Honors" to departed veterans across the state. One of these squads resides in the great Town of Colchester and has responded to 250 funerals for the calendar year 2022. This is a great service that is provided for our recently departed veterans.

The purpose of HB 6011 is to establish a personal income tax deduction for compensation received for performing Honor Guard Squad duties as authorized by CGS Section 27-76 and will have a minimal budgetary impact.

Passing this legislation will allow squad members to have the reimbursement funds as well as the ability to offset some of the costs necessary for all of the following expenses they incur.

Examples of expenses that Honor Guard Squads and members incur:

- Travel expenses to and from each funeral

- Rifle maintenance, cleaning, and repairs
- Purchase and maintain a personal weapons grade safe
- Purchase and maintain trigger locks to **safely** store and transport rifles
- Purchase of ammunition
- Batteries for bugles
- Replacement of cloth bags which are used to present expended brass to the veteran's family

Honor Guard members are expected to purchase and maintain their uniform. Uniform parts can include:

- Maintain and cleaning of uniforms used by Honor Guard members (explained below)
- Military style hat
- Uniform shirts (2)
- Uniform trousers (2)
- Military belt and buckle
- Black military style shoes
- A military style rain/overcoat with liner
- A military style black sweater with epaulets
- Several pairs of white gloves

Maintenance of the uniform must be done monthly (more often in hot weather) in order to maintain the proper appearance. This includes:

- Laundry cost for military pressing of the two shirts
- Cleaning and pressing of uniform trousers
- Black polish for military shoes
- Dry cleaning of the military sweater
- Dry cleaning of the rain/overcoat and liner

Another bill of great importance to our Veterans is **H.B. No. 5205, AN ACT CONCERNING VETERANS AND THE PASSPORT TO THE PARKS MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRATION FEE.**

I have heard from many Veterans on this issue. This bill will exempt any person who is a Veteran as defined by section 27-103 of the CGS, from payment of the Passport to Parks fee (now \$15) while registering a motor vehicle. The purpose of this legislation is to provide a financial benefit to our Connecticut Veterans who honorably served our country by protecting our country's freedom, our independence and our democracy.

These two bills are our way to express our lasting gratitude to the sacrifices that our Veterans made to defend our country so that we can live free.

Thank you for your consideration.